

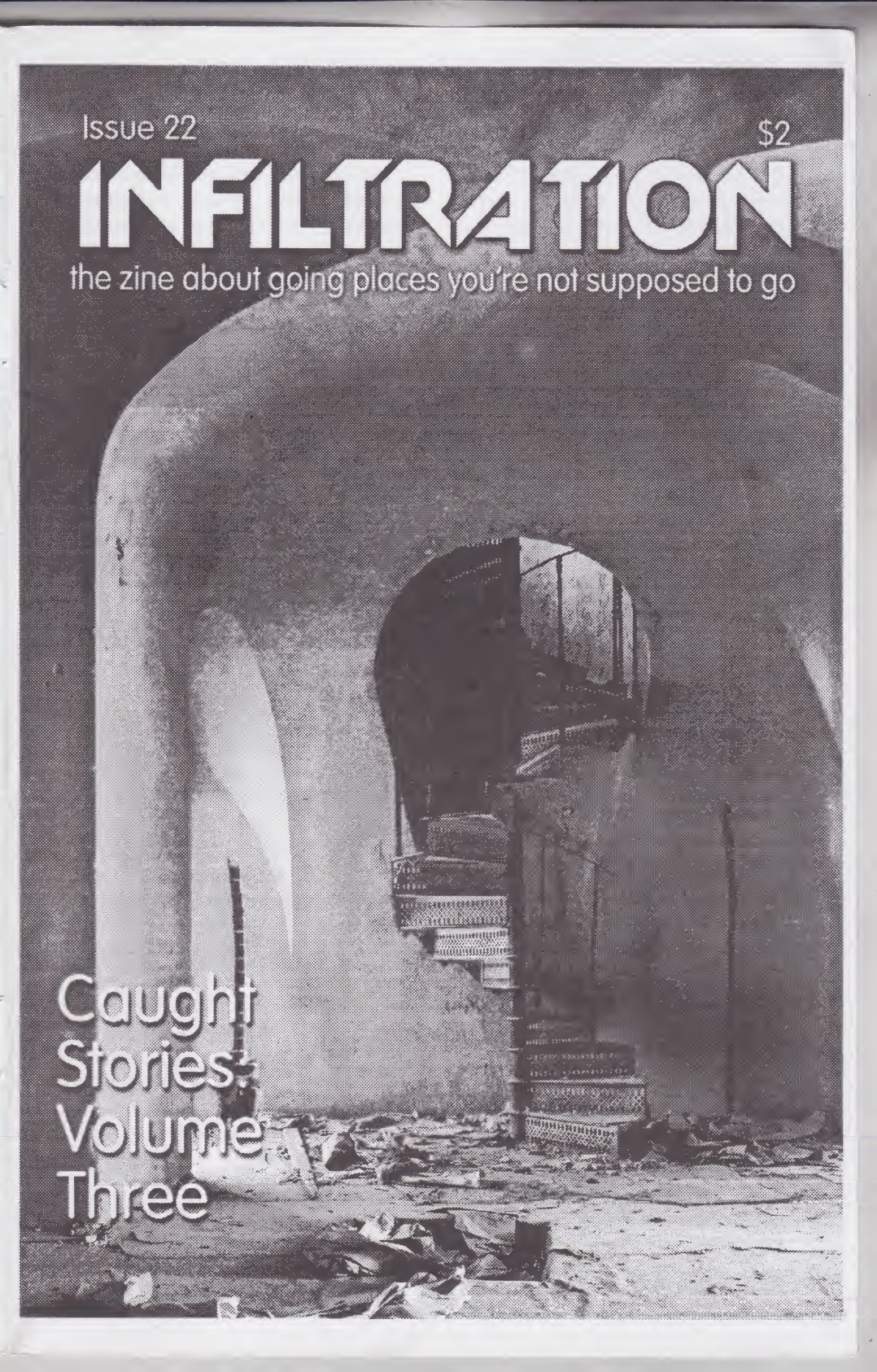
Issue 22

\$2

INFILTRATION

the zine about going places you're not supposed to go

Caught
Stories:
Volume
Three



Suspicious Behaviour

by Ninj and Liz

OUR LAST TWO "Caught Stories" issues were products of a kinder, gentler time. A time when you got jacked up on Peppermint Schnapps and then climbed a crane, knowing that the cops who waited for you at the bottom would simply tousle your hair, chuckle that boys will indeed be boys, and then give you a free ride home.

Alas, those carefree days have come to an end. Nervous cops and arrests at gunpoint are dismayingly common themes in this first post-September 11th "Caught Stories" issue. The klaxon-blaring, hyperalert paranoid reaction to the terrorist attacks has led to a crackdown on suspicious behaviour in the vicinity of infrastructure and buildings. Unfortunately for explorers, "suspicious behaviour" includes such pursuits as climbing a bridge just for fun, taking a harmless look around a tunnel to satisfy your curiosity, or taking pictures of an abandoned factory simply out of aesthetic appreciation. Non-malicious, non-commercial motivations such as these confuse a lot of people, especially the kind of people who tend to become police officers or security guards; to such people, the motivations of urban explorers are less familiar and more confusing than those of thieves, vandals, spies or terrorists. It's easier for them to assume we're intent on some sort of destructive behaviour, even if we're carrying nothing but a flashlight and a camera and probably feel a closer attachment to the structures we're exploring than anyone else.

As explorers, our response must be twofold. First, despite the often unrealistic, overreactive nature of heightened security (particularly in North America) since September 11th, we must keep in mind that the security climate has changed. A fine-tuning of our explorer's common sense is thus in order: we should realize that attempting to explore places such as active airports, power plants or military bases would be a tremendous mistake now, whereas it was perhaps simply dicey in the past. On a more day-to-day level, explorers need to be more careful not to get caught than they have been in the past, taking greater pains to avoid such common downfalls as overconfidence, carelessness and impatience.

Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, we should remain undeterred. Allowing the darkening threat of future terrorist attacks or indeed of our increasingly scarce civil rights to deter our curiosity or intimidate us away from expressing our deep appreciation for the hidden and neglected bits of our urban landscapes would be the greatest crime of all. Continuing to support and act out the ideas of free thinking, considerate exploration and questioning of authority in productive, benevolent, and visible ways will allow us to represent ourselves as what we really are: people who love our cities, not those who wish to destroy them.



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Radioactive chimneys at the University of Toronto

"The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value. I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection." —*Thomas Paine*

"A ship in a harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for."
—*Anonymous*

Infiltration is published occasionally. Please send submissions and feedback to: Infiltration, PO Box 13, Station E, Toronto, ON, M6H 4E1. Website: www.infiltration.org. E-mail: ninj@infiltration.org, liz@infiltration.org. You can subscribe to this zine for the next four issues by sending us \$10 cash if you want. Cover: An ominous staircase in Russia's Otrada palace, courtesy Jason Grant (www.arch-image.com).

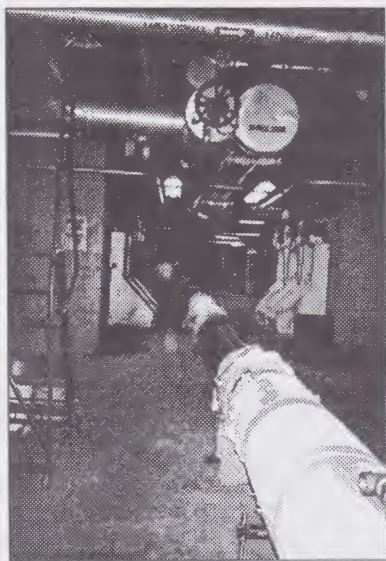
Caught Stories

MammalQuest

We finally got into the Saint Paul steam tunnels after knowing they existed for years... we just never bothered to go try 'em out for some reason. We were finally goaded into giving them a shot when Fuck saw a news blurb about how the U had found some bomb shelters beneath the veterinary sciences buildings from the 1950s that no one

knew were there. We didn't really expect them to be connected to the steam tunnels (or they wouldn't have been lost for so long, eh?), but it was a good excuse to go get into the damned things.

We first tried to access the tunnels though the steam plant. We snuck into the plant just fine, but then chose to flee when a couple of workers came down some stairs to the level we were on. It was only something like 10:00 p.m., which is pretty damn early to be doing shit like that. So we instead started searching for telltale vent covers in the ground. After much walking aimlessly about, we finally we found one, but it was padlocked. The second one we found was in the middle of a brightly lit area between several buildings, and was completely stuck, to boot.



Looking into the Physical Plant from an open exterior door.

Finally, we found an unusually shaped vent exuding that wonderful, hot, dry, steam tunnel scent. God, I love that smell. The cover wasn't locked down, and wasn't in a horribly exposed place, so we crawled down into the shallow tunnel below. Whoo hoo! Action Squad had finally conquered all three University of Minnesota steam tunnel systems.

The tunnels are really weird over there. They are all shallow-level, compared to the Minneapolis campus; however, in many places they have multiple levels, one right over the other, and they shoot off in seemingly random directions and heights constantly. They slant up and down at angles that are quite steep in places, and there are no signs letting you know where you are (there are building numbers in places, but that helped us not at all).

To get our bearings, we popped up into campus buildings and looked for helpful signage. We poked around in Haecker Hall, and then got into the "Meat Sciences" building, where we found the "Processing" and "Cutting" rooms, filled with giant bone saws, super-size freezers, and the stench of blood.

After having our fill of the butcher school classrooms, we returned to the tunnels, checked out a couple of other buildings, and then found a manhole cover in the tunnel ceiling that, when we

opened it up a bit, admitted a breeze laden with the strong smell of large mammals.

Too cocky, probably, from our previous trips up into campus buildings, we decided to check it out. I went first, pushing the manhole cover across the concrete as quietly as possible. Well, to be honest, I'm not sure that I tried as hard as I should have to keep the noise to an absolute minimum.

Once up, I looked around and found myself in a room with several barred-in animal enclosures, and a sign reading something like "Large Animal Hospital." I realized that this was the kind of place that had not only large animals, but also animal tranquilizers, which I understand are quite popular with the raver crowd. This, of course, meant it was highly likely that they'd have someone on staff all night, and/or a security system. I turned to tell the other guys not to come up... and that's when I heard something.

I whipped around just in time to see a woman walk out from around a corner about 30 feet away. I was wearing a headlamp, covered in filth, and standing there at 1:30 in the morning.



*Max crawling out from a side passage.
(Photos courtesy Action Squad.)*

hole in the floor and we all ran like hell. We knew the police would be there within minutes. Cap, who had been in the back, was now in the front, and he took a wrong turn early on, so we had to sprint back almost all the way to the open manhole in order to get back on track. Much swearing ensued between gasps for breath.

Deciding we wouldn't be able to get all the way back to the entrance point at a run without getting lost, I led everyone back into Haecker Hall. There, we surfaced into the basement, tucked away our more incriminating gear, and hurried up the stairs and out the front doors. We made it back to the car across campus without incident, and got the hell out of there.

Getting caught in the act like that is really weird... on one hand, it's obviously a bad thing, since it makes it harder to return (and cuts your exploration short). On the other hand, there really are few ways to end a trip that are more fun than successfully escaping from the authorities with the adrenaline singing in your veins, rather than trudging back over your tracks, exhausted and well aware of how sore your feet are.

—Max Action

She froze.
I froze.

I felt my mouth open on its own.

I heard a voice coming out of my mouth say, "howdy!" in a quite conversational manner.

Then I practically dove into the

Mr. Nice Guard

Hospitals are fun, as any explorer probably knows. They afford all sorts of machinery to look at, as well as large, fun roofs, and labyrinthine, biohazard-ridden basements. It is just those two things that led my brother and I to our local hospital this past Memorial Day afternoon.

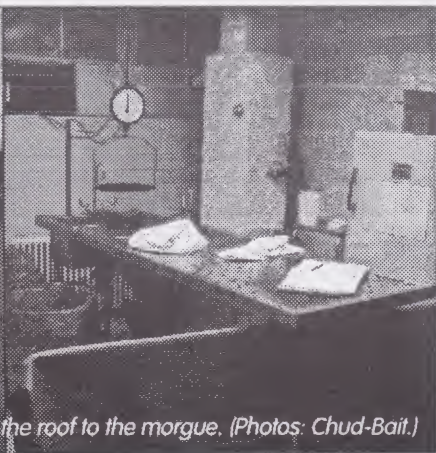
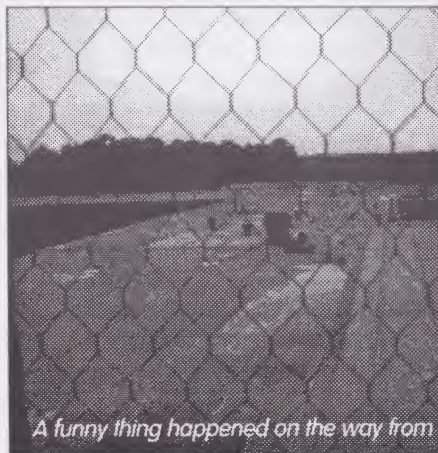
Armed with not even a story of what we were doing in the hospital, we arrived and walked in, a mixture of fear and boredom fueling us. The front desk was empty, as well as the gift shop. Even the ATM was out of order, making the building seem almost abandoned.

We walked around a bit, looking for a promising stairwell by which to access the roof, which we found promptly. A woman was sitting in a waiting area near the door to the stairs, but we ignored her and she ignored us. Up the stairs we went, pausing to snap a picture of the roof we hoped to access. Ten more steps, and we reached the door to the roof. Actually, the door led to a small room of fun-looking machinery, but past that we saw the door that led to our

objective. Two doors. Two chances to be locked. A 25 percent chance that we would actually reach the roof. My hand slowly moved to the knob, gently caressing its cold, shiny surface. I turned my wrist, and... nothing. The door was locked.

Not to be defeated, we immediately turned around and headed down the stairs. After a bit of wandering, we finally made it to the basement, via the elevator. A quick survey of the area told us that there was nothing much in that subterranean Laundromat except a very interesting door labeled "Morgue," with two metal doors right outside it, quite obviously slabs for cold-storage, if my movie-watching career has been any help to me. We turned around to search a bit further, but a nurse passed us with a "what are you kids doing here I oughta have-you thrown into a biohazard barrel" look on her face, so we decided it might be best to continue exploring upstairs.

We got back to the elevator, a little bummed that our efforts did not yield any decent pictures or experi-



A funny thing happened on the way from the roof to the morgue. (Photos: Chud-Bait.)

ences, when we heard a ding. I turned and looked at my brother, but his face told me that he was thinking what I was: we didn't press the button. Bracing for the worst, but hoping for the best, we stood back and let the doors slide open.

"What can I help you with?" demanded the security guard who appeared, his stance telling us that he came down here just to deal with us. My heart skipped a beat, but that was just enough time for me to recognize the security guard. It was my good friend's grandfather, a kindly old man who is known for being fairly friendly when it comes to teenagers, unlike many of his peers.

Quickly and nervously exchanging pleasantries — and stumbling over our reasons for being there — we got in the elevator with him.

"Would you guys like to see the morgue?" he asked us jokingly. I readily accepted his offer, and he stopped the elevator doors as they were closing. We stepped out and walked down the basement hall, where he unlocked the previously un-traversable door, letting us peek inside.

"Can I snap a pic?" I asked hopefully.

"That's not allowed," came the reply. "But... I could let you in and close the door."

I stepped into the room and snapped a quick photo. We left, promising the guard to tell our mother that he said hello.

Thinking back on our little run-in, we got off very lucky. In a small town, even though there is only a limited amount of buildings to explore, the

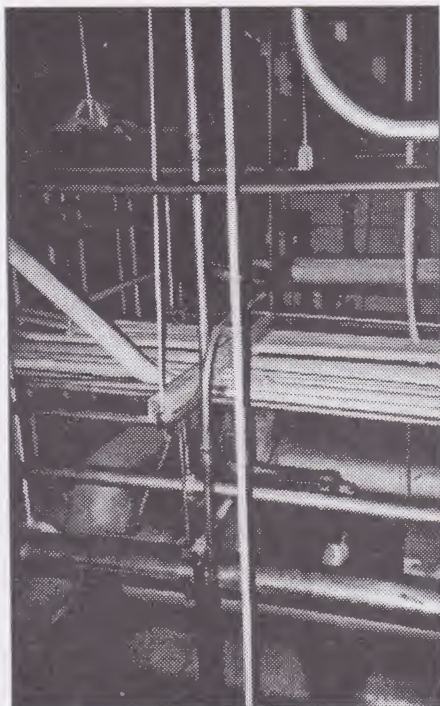
fact that everyone knows everyone else can be a great asset, if used sparingly. If only everyone could be as lucky.

—Chud-bait

Get Down Now!

It was a dark night and I had planned to grab my lockpicks and head down to the Arizona State University steam tunnels, where I'd map and film as much of the system as possible from 9:30 p.m. through 5:00 a.m. The friend whose camera I was borrowing and another friend asked if they could come along. Under normal conditions I would not have spent even a millisecond in consideration, but the two individuals who wanted to join me were my best friends, people who I'd be rooming with for at least the next three years. So I considered and in the end decided that I would let them tag along if they agreed to a preliminary lecture on exploring. I told them the basics about not damaging anything, safety, etc. I also made it clear that I was willing to take advice from either of them, but in the end my word would be final regarding any decision underground. They agreed and we were off.

We got into the tunnels and everything proceeded wonderfully. We had gotten great footage and I only bumped my head once. This lasted for 45 minutes, until my friends decided that they did not want to be down there any longer. I was disappointed to be honest, but was willing to lead them out. I understood that they were probably worried about the asbestos, and seeing me wear-



Some of the five miles of pipes and tunnels under Arizona State. (Photos courtesy Phantom, who was arrested in these same tunnels a few weeks after Darkness.)

ing a respirator probably did not help much (I warned them of the danger beforehand). The real problem was that they wanted to leave the system utilizing the quickest and easiest location. This place happened to be right in front of us, as we were in the boiler room beneath Old Main. I told them exiting through one of the most famous buildings on campus was probably not the very brightest of ideas and that I'd take them back through another place but, unfortunately for all of us, they went. I promptly cussed them out and went back down to explore for the rest of the night.

As I later found out, my friends managed to set off an alarm when

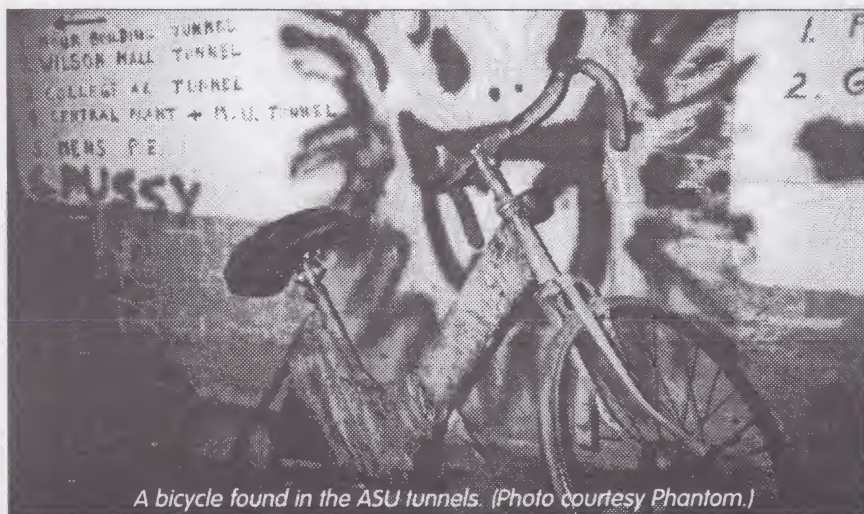
leaving. My friend with the camera was caught almost immediately, and the tape in the camera included shots of all of us and our names. I had specifically told my friend not to say any of our names on camera but he made a few slips, so now the police knew our names and what we looked like. Since the police had all the information that they needed, a search was begun in earnest. About two hours after leaving the tunnel system, my other friend returned to our residence, noticed about 15 cops surrounding the place, and walked to the police station and gave himself up.

Now back to the beginning of the trouble. I didn't know that any alarm had gone off, so I roamed the

system in the dark, memorizing five miles of landmarks and passages, completely unaware that five police officers had been sent down to find me. I slid sideways down an extremely tight unlit passageway, and near the end of this beautiful thing I reached a T-intersection. One of the tunnels had a large grate over it and I looked through it to see an even lower section. I tried the grate and was able to raise it. There was a 15-foot drop and a metal ladder affixed to the side. Oh boy! I went down and was in a squarish, concrete room littered with newspapers and other common junk. On one side of this dark room was a rectangular slit about two feet wide that spanned the entire room opposite the ladder. The room beyond the slit was very well lit, like an office. Tons of machinery and noise. I decided not to go into this place because I was not exactly sure where I was on campus, but thought I might be near the Steam and Air Conditioning facility. I had seen people working there

late at night before so I didn't want to risk it. So I left and backtracked a bit, turned down an unexplored tunnel and just trudged about for a while until, after turning a corner, I saw a flashlight. The man was kind of far away and I could not see him very well. Suddenly, he trained his flashlight on me. I responded by repeatedly blinking my 4 D-Cell Maglite at him. He then started slowly forward and began yelling at me, but I could not really make out what he was saying due to the thrum of the machinery. I started yelling back at him, since from my perspective he was wearing all black and certainly did not look like security, but man I was dumb. I guess I just wasn't prepared to meet someone else down there. And I certainly did not want to run if it was security.

I finally understood what he was screaming when I distinctly heard "GET DOWN NOW!" Oh shit... no time to ditch the picks. I get down and the guy comes up with a GUN pointed at my chest. He tells me not to look at



A bicycle found in the ASU tunnels. (Photo courtesy Phantom.)

him or move, and then proceeds to cuff me! I was marched back through several of the tunnels, having to listen to the cop complain all the while about his radio reception. It seems that the officers that were sent down there could not communicate together with their little walkie-talkies. After failing to get out through several doors (his keys didn't work in many of the rusted locks) we went all the way back towards the Old Main sections and made to turn right at an intersection. Just as we were about to pass the corner, three other cops walked around it. Since the cop who arrested me was standing behind me with his hand on my cuffs and shoulder, the little posse didn't recognize him as one of their own as quick as they should have. They noticed me though and probably thought that the guy behind was with me. All three then whipped out their guns and trained them at both myself and the other officer. The cop behind me was like "HOLD IT! HOLD IT! IT'S ME I GOT HIM!!!"

Following this freaky experience, I was eventually dragged along and out of the system. I was placed under arrest and charged with three counts of second-degree trespassing (one for gaining access to a fenced-in construction yard, one for gaining access to the tunnel system, and one for gaining access to Old Main), one count of having in my possession tools used for burglary (lockpicks) and one count of burglary. (I'd taken two broken pieces of a small sign reading ASU SECURITY SWITCHBOARD ALARM, which I really did not think anyone would care about or even notice.)

On the appointed day, I dreadingly

trudged two miles to the "court-house" (*cough* strip mall *cough*) and after staring at the wall for nearly 3 1/2 hours and listening to overweight rent-a-cops wheeze through slime-clogged nostrils I finally was admitted to the prosecutor's office. I promptly waived my rights and accepted a reduced sentence: \$255 fine and 24 hours of community service. Two charges were dropped and they never even charged me with the felonies due to the fact that the case was just too weak.

Suffice it to say, I'm happy! Uber-happy! I thought my life was over at age 19, but I am now free of that black burden and can finally relax. If you've ever had two felonies hovering above you for over a month without truly knowing what's going to happen... I can't describe how it feels, only that it is one of the most terrible things I have ever experienced in my entire life. In fact, if I was convicted of either one I would not have been able to continue going to college even if there was no jail time.

I've learned two very important things from this episode. First, urban exploration is one of the most exciting and wonderful hobbies around and I certainly plan on continuing it to an even higher extreme. Second, NEVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER EVER BRING LOCKPICKS! The difference between getting caught somewhere you're not supposed to be and being caught somewhere you're not supposed to be with lockpicks is the difference between getting yelled at and incurring a fine and getting personally acquainted with "Butch."

—Darkness

Hangin' with the Russian Police

I knew the abandoned Otrada estate was located on the territory of some sanatorium or other, but this was really all I knew. During my scouting trip I happened to walk past one of the estate's auxiliary buildings, obviously still in use. The sign by the door read "FSB Kindergarten" (the FSB is Russia's kinder, gentler KGB). This amused me a little, since I didn't know their agents began at such a tender age, but I kept walking and didn't think much more about it.

The next day I was in the palace, setting up my camera when two guys in camouflage walked by, giving a couple ladies a little tour. They walked past me, but after a few steps turned around and started to ask some questions. Like, what exactly are you doing there and who are you anyway? Does security know

you're here? You probably snuck in through a hole in the fence, huh? And so forth. Here I did a bit of explaining, to the effect that no, I had not 'snuck' in, but had entered quite casually through one of the many gaping windows and that I didn't have anyone's permission since by the looks of things, there wasn't anyone to ask for said permission in the first place; I figured the building was ownerless. But as it turns out, there is an owner and that owner is the FSB. The guys said I would need to go see the head of security and let him know exactly who I was, why I was there, and why he should believe me that I'm not a spy. I said I'd certainly do that and they walked on.

But they came back very shortly. They said it'd be better for me to wait there; they'd send someone. Then they walked off again.



The "FSB Kindergarten" (Photo courtesy Jassen Grund)



But again, not for long. This time it was the ol' "Come with us."

They led me off to the sanatorium's main building, which is pretty nice really, in good repair. The first thing you notice as you walk in is a big portrait of "Iron Felix" Dzerzhinskij (founder of the NKVD, which became the KGB) done in marble. Very imposing. But all in all, it's a warm and comfortable place. After they locked up my heavy camera case, I could really relax and get cozy.

Now, I should mention that all this was happening on 23 February, Defenders of the Fatherland Day (formerly Red Army Day, a big holiday for all the men), so the head of security was at home in Moscow, enjoying his holiday, maybe barbecuing shashliki. They called him up, but I had to wait about three hours while he made it out to Semyonovskoe.

Semyonovskoe is just a little village, really out in the sticks you could say. As I understand it, not many foreigners make it out to these parts, so everybody took a real interest in me. They wanted to know how

things were in the States, how much you make a month and what's the price for an apartment or gasoline. I even met the local priest, who jokingly (I guess?) told me I was 'done for, brother.' During those three hours the FSB guys made a real effort to keep me entertained. We had some great herbal tea at the sanatorium cafe, they ordered me a big lunch at the cafeteria, gave me newspapers to read, showed me their collection of pre-revolutionary photographs of Otrada, even took me up to the roof to show off the wonderful view of the countryside. I honestly forgot I was officially 'detained' and really felt more like the guest of honor. Those FSB guys were sincerely friendly and amazingly hospitable. I certainly don't think you'd get the same treatment from the spooks at the CIA!

Finally the head of security arrived. He took me into his office, asked me a bunch of questions and carefully wrote down my answers, looked through my documents. I was slightly nervous and he seemed to like that. But I can't say that he seemed at all mad for spoiling his holiday like I had. Then he asked me to wait in the hall and spent about 20 minutes making some calls, verifying my information I guess. At the end of it he invited me back in, told me a little about the history of the estate and said I was free to go. The guys downstairs all said a

big goodbye and I headed back out into the snow, feeling the warm gaze of the FSB behind me.

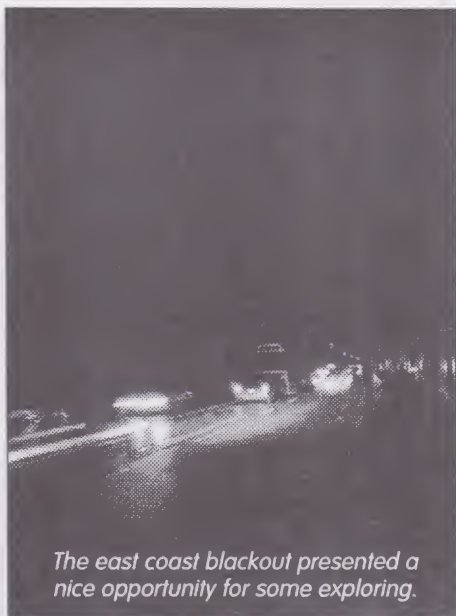
—Jason Grant



*The second floor of the Otrada palace.
(All photos on this spread: Jason Grant.)*

Blaxploration

On the night of the big blackout I really just wanted to sleep, but whenever I closed my eyes my head swam with tantalizing visions of a blackened city full of mute alarms and blind surveillance cameras. Throwing on some clothes, I headed outside and began the long march



The east coast blackout presented a nice opportunity for some exploring.

downtown. With my route lit only by headlights from the occasional passing car, I made my way to the darkened campus of the University of Toronto.

Finding an unlocked entrance to a favourite spot, I crept through the silent, empty and unlit building with my flashlight in hand. Hearing some noise, I peered over a balcony ledge and caught sight of a light coming from the level below. I spotted a small group prowling the hallways and checking doors by the light of a single flashlight. Were these good guys or bad guys? I headed down a nearby flight of stairs, picked up their trail and silently followed them through the darkness. I established that the group consisted of four guys and one girl in their 20s, that they were familiar with the campus, and that they were harmless. Turning on my flashlight, I strolled up and asked them if they were look-

ing for tunnels. They said they were, and asked me if I knew of any nearby entrances. I said sure.

Leaving the building and strolling across the dark campus, we entered another nearby complex of buildings and made our way through several levels of hallways, stairways and skyways

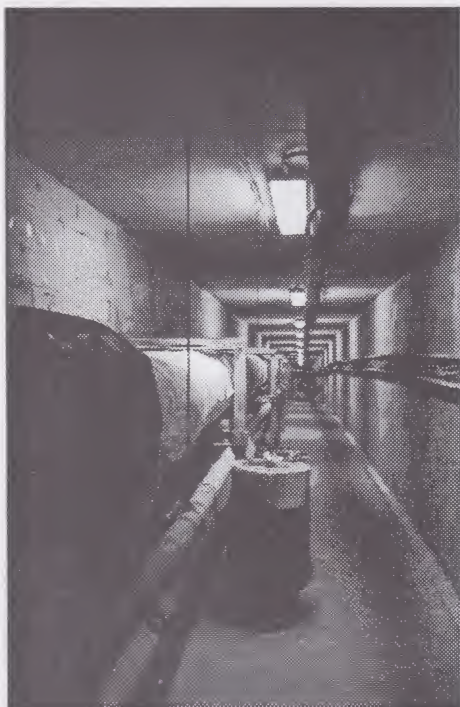
unhampered by surveillance cameras or motion-detecting lights. Descending to the basement, we pried open the door to a large, unlit mechanical room, where I shone my flashlight to reveal an entrance leading down to the tunnels.

After trudging through the tunnels a bit and pushing our way through some doors with non-functioning alarms, several members of our party suggested we leave the tunnels for a bit in order to cool down and get some fresh air. Pushing open a nearby door we spilled out into a room filled with giant storage tanks, and from here climbed out to a public hallway dimly lit with emergency lights. We realized we were inside the Medical Sciences Building, the second largest building on campus and one of the most secure. Someone wondered what kind of view we might be able to get

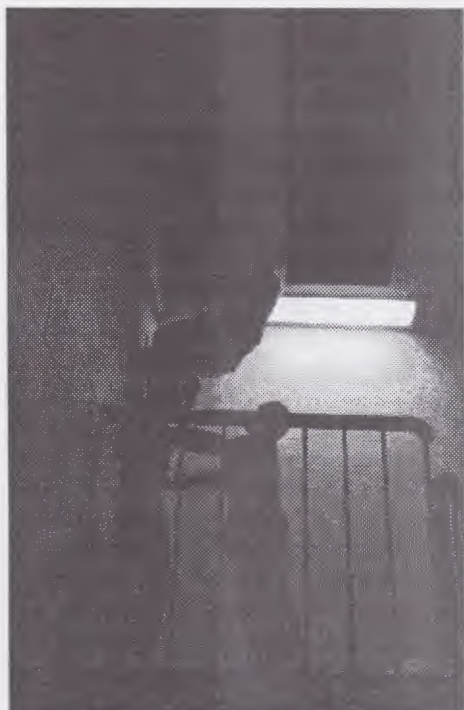
from the roof, and had scarcely finished asking before we began bounding up the stairs to find out.

The first roof hatch we came to was on the sixth floor; I assured my travelling companions that we could do better than this, but two of them were determined to check the hatch out. After some acrobatic climbing, they managed to hoist themselves through the hatch 12 feet up in the centre of the room and, even more impressively, to close the hatch behind them on the way back down. Comparing notes on rooftopping strategies, I learned that, although they'd never heard of infiltration or urban exploration, these newfound colleagues of mine weren't exactly novices. They'd managed to hoist themselves up and into a lot of interesting spots around campus just for the sake of satisfying their curiosity. They were explorers. Clearly, I'd stumbled upon the right people with whom to pursue the elusive roof of the Medical Sciences Building.

Switching staircases, I led us up to the highest point of the building I knew how to access: a rickety wooden ladder leading to a roof hatch above the eighth floor. Climbing out onto a 30-square-foot gravel ledge, the six of us had a great view of the mostly dark and silent city, and of the bright, generator-powered rides at the not-yet-open Canadian National Exhibition flaunting their waste of electricity. We also surveyed the high concrete wall that separated our ledge from the top of the build-



After meeting up with five strangers, I led them through the partially lit steam tunnels to the Medical Sciences Building.



ing. The decorative wall was filled with indentations, but the hand-holds and footholds seemed to be spaced far apart.

The best climber in our group, a tall, skinny guy named Jeff, studied the 20-foot-high wall intensely for about three minutes before asking me for a boost. Wedging himself into a hollow about four feet up, Jeff somehow managed to pull and shove his way from ledge to ledge until he had made it to the top of the wall. He called down to us that he was looking out at a vast expanse of gravel roof that seemed to go on forever. We suggested that perhaps he should try to find an easier way down, and he liked that idea a lot more than he liked the idea of trying to climb back down the wall, so he headed off to explore.

Meanwhile the rest of us waited on the ledge, looking out at the odd patches of light amid the darkened city, and wondering if there were other people out there doing what we were doing. Just then our conversation was cut off by loud clanking and whirring noises as the ventilation systems and air conditioners of the buildings all around us suddenly roared back to life and lights began to flicker on all across the campus. We crowded into the shadows and hoped no one could see us, and then fell silent as we heard noises coming from below. After a few very long seconds the roof hatch lifted open, and Jeff's smiling head popped out of it. He had indeed found another route,



We navigated our way to lower rooftops via roof hatches.

and he wanted to show it to us.

Lowering ourselves back inside the now much brighter and noisier building, we switched stairwells again and headed to the top. Jeff had propped open a door to a service stairwell that took us up to an incredibly large floor filled with gorgeous, colourful machinery and ladders, catwalks and pipes shooting off in all directions. Bypassing all this for now, Jeff led the way up a steep staircase and out to another door he'd propped open.

We emerged onto the gravel surface of the roof and saw that Jeff had not been exaggerating about its size. Gradually walking its circumference, we watched as the city below us gradually flickered back to life. Jeff recounted how he'd nearly died of a heart attack when all the machines in the mechanical room had suddenly roared to life around him while he'd been making his way back down to us in the darkness.

After a long while, we headed inside and back down to the mechanical wonderland. We were examining a thick forest of insulated chimneys labelled "danger: radioactive" when out of the corner of my eye I noticed something moving in the shadows across the room. While the

others kept excitedly talking, I turned and saw that a middle-aged guy dressed in black was making his way towards us. He didn't look happy. My stomach churned nervously.

"Someone's here," I said to the group, and their cheerful conversation died off immediately.

"What are you doing up here?" the guy asked as he walked up to us.

"Just looking around," I lamely volunteered.

"How did you get in here?"

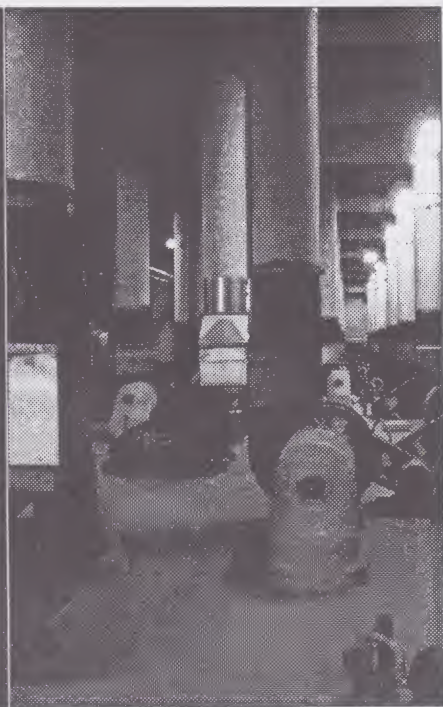
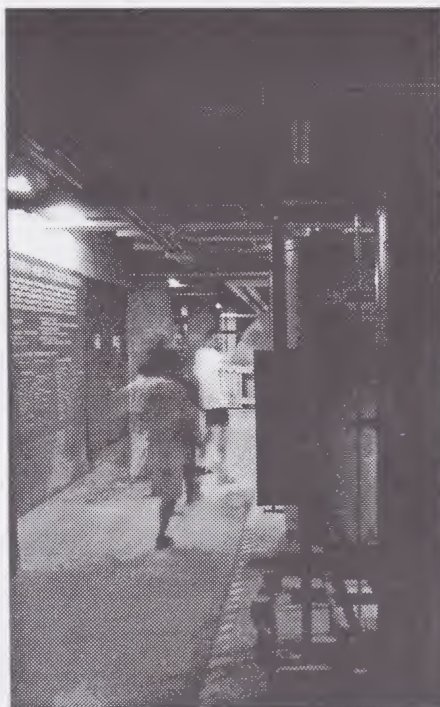
"We just wandered through a couple of doors," Jeff replied.

At this point the guy shook his head and reached for a cell phone in his pocket. Feeling that the situation was about to take a turn for the worse, I mumbled "I think we should leave" and began to walk away.

"Don't move," the guy ordered, but I kept going. Behind me I heard him saying "Security, we have some intruders up here." I hopped into the nearby service elevator and looked out to see if anyone was going to join me, but as the elevator doors slid closed I saw that the group was heading for the stairs instead. Taking the service elevator down two floors, I hopped out and ran towards the noise I could hear coming from a nearby stairwell. Emerging into the



From the uppermost rooftop, we watched the city flicker back to life around us.



After returning from the roof, we were examining the radioactive chimneys inside a gigantic mechanical room when we suddenly realized we had company.

stairwell a couple of flights behind the others, I began racing down the stairs after them, catching up with them just as we reached the ground floor. We spilled out into the night through a door that locked behind us.

Only now did I notice that Jeff and one of the other guys weren't with us. "Where did they go?" I asked the girl.

"I don't know... I think maybe they stayed up there," she replied. "Or maybe they took off a different way."

"I sure hope they took off," I said, as the four of us began to wander back around to the front of the building.

"I'll check," the girl said, pulling

out her cell phone out and calling Jeff, who reported to her that they'd made it out and suggested that everyone meet up somewhere nearby.

She'd just put her phone away when I spotted a campus cop walking toward us from the direction of the Medical Sciences Building. I suggested that everyone run for it, and yelled "good luck" into the air as we scattered in separate directions. I ran until my shaking legs were done running, and only as I continued home in the darkness did it occur to me that although I'd mentioned my zine, I'd never exchanged contact information with anyone. I hope they all made it home alive.

—Ninjalicious

Nature Lovers

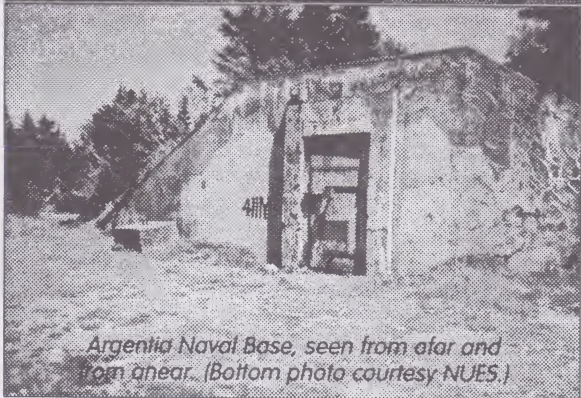
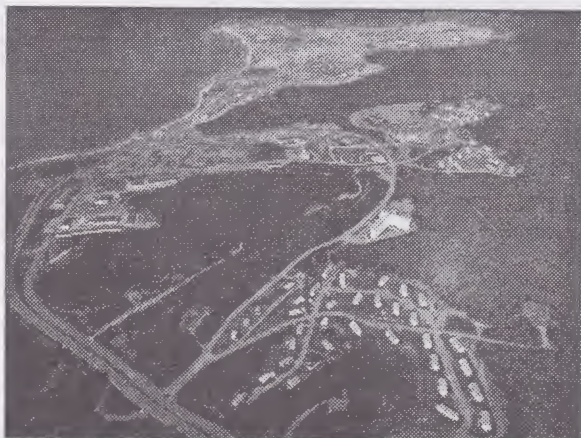
As a group, the Newfoundland Urban Exploration Society (NUES) has done a lot of exploring. We've been to abandoned hospitals, radar stations, new sewers and old sawmills. Yet, we've only been caught once, at an old abandoned military base.

Argentia Naval Base is a mainly abandoned World War II base. A section of it is still in use and has security based at the gate. However, the majority of it is either abandoned totally or used for office space.

During our second trip there, we were exploring the underground bunkers behind the abandoned block housing. We found eight bunkers, one of which is now being used to store asbestos from the buildings they are tearing down.

There are roads going in every direction back there for miles so there are probably hundreds of bunkers there. We spent an hour and a half walking the trail, checking out the bunkers, taking pictures in some and looking for the underground hospital. Our car was left at the beginning of the trail, near the old housing.

When we finally got to the end of the trail, we found sign with a map



Argentia Naval Base, seen from afar and from a near. (Bottom photo courtesy NUES.)

showing off a new tourist walking trail. Apparently a walking trail has been put through another section of the base. We were checking it out to see where it started and if it indicated anything historical or anything that might be interesting when a car pulled up. Out walked a security officer.

He'd obviously seen us walking out of the woods of the restricted area of the base. He asked who we were and what we were doing. We pretended that we'd thought the trail/road we had just come off of was the tourist walking trail that was shown on the map/sign. Hearing this he asked if it was our car left up

near the housing block. He then explained that we'd not been on the official trail, but instead in an area that was strictly off limits. We played dumb and surprised, pretended to worry that we'd done something wrong and secretly hoped that he wouldn't check our backpacks and find all our gear and old maps.

We must have succeeded as he not only let us off the hook, he drove us back to our car, talking to us the whole time about the changes they were making to the base. We continued smiling and nodding. The fact that we all were carrying cameras and looked a little lost probably helped us out quite a bit. As he drove away, we waited to get into the car to talk about our close escape.

—NUES

Draining Cop

One evening Static, Grebin and I (of Urban Exploration Canada) decided to continue investigating an odd room we'd found inside the Backbone drain, a two-metre round concrete pipe in my home city of Barrie. We crowbarred the manhole above the chamber we were interested in open for the first time ever, and climbed down to stand on top of some gross pollutant traps we'd previously only seen from the inside. But we'd left the manhole open and it was in a driveway of sorts so it was soon time to go.

I left first, pulling myself back up onto the concrete platform then climbing out of the chamber. I emerged onto the asphalt, brushed myself off, and looked to my left. A police cruiser! He was clearly com-

ing my way and had without a doubt just watched me climb out of the drain.

"Guys," I said loudly, "cops." From within the chamber I heard someone say "what?" and someone else say "he said 'cops!'" Person A said "is he serious?" which prompted person B to yell up to me "are you serious?" by which point the officer was already approaching me on foot.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello. You're probably wondering what's going on," I said.

"Did you just come out of that manhole?"

"Yes sir."

"Did you open it?"

"Yes sir."

"Is there anyone else down there?"

An instant of indecision, then, "Yes, sir," since I figured he would check anyway.

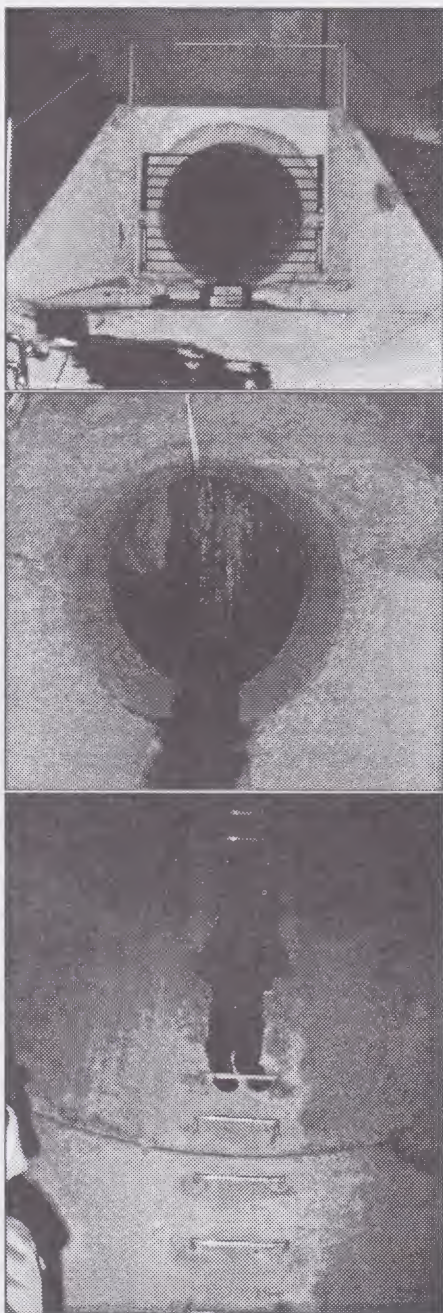
"Right," he said. He shone his flashlight into the chamber and yelled down. Grebin and Static yelled back up. "Come out," he said, and they did.

So now the three of us were standing around an open manhole while the officer got his partner to keep an eye on us. He went back to his car and used the radio to call backup. Both policemen were clearly ill-at-ease. I don't think this had been in basic training. We stood around, looking at our feet, feeling sort of uncomfortable.

Eventually, Officer A came back. He took our names and checked our identification. He asked what was going on. He asked what was down there. He asked what he'd find if he

went down there, and we told him. We told him it was the outside of two gross pollutant traps which we had discovered a while ago and which we had only ever been inside, previous to this excursion. He decided to check for himself. We shot each other startled, amused looks when he climbed down into the chamber ("Make sure they don't move a muscle," he said to his partner, who had us standing near a fence a few feet away from the manhole, "Don't let them come near me").

His backup arrived while he was down there. I couldn't believe the scene: the three of us, benign, well-meaning, cuddly UECers, standing in the headlights of a cruiser while two more swerved across the parking lot towards us. Who did they think we *were*? We were perhaps less frightened, on the whole, than we should have been. We'd all heard "busted drainer" stories and found that the worst that ever happened was a scolding and a ticket, leaving a great story in its wake. (*Everyone* loves confused cop stories! Don't ask me why, it's just one of our little failings, I guess.) Given that, it was difficult to be appropriately cowed by the multitude of police officers, since I was already trying to word the encounter in my head for a write-up. Hoping not to get a ticket, we remained respectful, still, and best of all, quiet, but each of us was privy to a shared secret triumph — we had made a cop go draining! — so it was hard not to smile.



The trip into the Backbone drain went well until the group started exiting via the manhole. (Photos courtesy UEC.)

They asked why we were down there and we told them about UEC and about storm drains and about the hobby of urban exploration at large.

"Are you guys for real?" they said, and we said yes. "Do you play Dungeons and Dragons?" they asked, and we said no. "You expect me to believe you were in that sewer for FUN?" they asked, and we said yes. "For fun and for documentary purposes," I clarified.

The policemen exchanged looks. "Look," said Officer A, "we've got a canine unit on the way, because I can't believe there aren't any substances involved here." We assured him we were stone sober.

"Well," we were warned, "this parking lot is private property so we *could* charge you with trespassing, if we wanted. We won't," — yay — "but if we have any break and enters in this area tonight, we'll be coming to *your* house" (it wasn't clear which of our houses he meant) "and pulling you out of bed so fast your head will spin. We will *not* be knocking. Understand?"

Fascists! "Yes sir," we all said.

"Well," he said, "good."

There was a pause. "Would you like us to close up that manhole, sir?" Grebin asked.

"Yes," he said, so we did. "Is that all?" we asked.

It was. We thanked the officers for their time and apologized for the trouble. They told us to stay out of the sewers. They left. We ran for our car and left too. The canine unit never came. The entire encounter with the police from the first word to the last had spanned maybe 20 min-

utes. "We got away with that!" Grebin cheered, because we had, and we went for coffee, and that was that.

—Mr. Snee

The Molson Incident

We gathered in a hole-in-the wall pub in one of the dodgy bits of Calgary hanging in the ominous shadow of the former industrial outpost of the Carling O'Keefe/Molson Empire. It was the first time I'd met Agent Kaos face to face, though I'd often heard of his legendary exploits during his year Down Under. It was the second time I'd met Blackie, who'd been mapping the underground of Cowtown since his 13th year, and the second time I'd met his strongly opinionated cohort, Toad. Agent Kaos introduced us to two newbies to the game, Squeezy, a young man whose alias brought to mind a Fisher-Price toy, and the probably teenage Phoenix, who made up her alias on the spot.

Having a few drinks at that hole-in-the-wall pub was probably our first mistake. Telling liquored-up bar patrons of our intentions as a means to impress was our second, but there were many larger mistakes to come.

The massive brewery with its many large buildings was built in the 1890s and was rumoured to contain elaborate gardens, a giant aquarium, some sort of inn and a huge well. I'd often wondered about what was inside, but it had never occurred to me to look. By the time we all decided to have a peek, on 15 March 2002, the brewery had 'officially' been abandoned for eight years. We

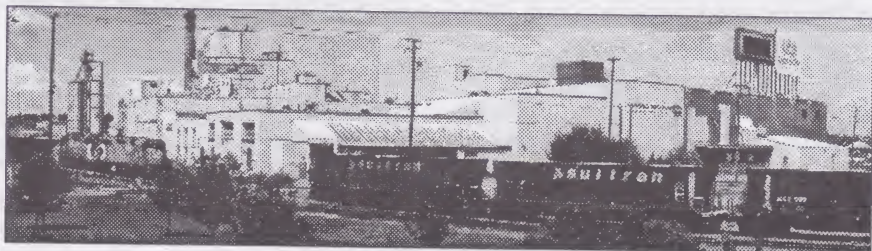
thought it was our oyster, our holy grail, and that it belonged to us.

Blackie, Toad, and another woman named Guano had already explored the brewery briefly a night or two before, so we had experience on our side. I suggested walking a few blocks through the fresh and falling snow toward our target, but the others thought it was coldish and we should drive and park close. We parked our vehicles across the street from the complex, in the parking lot of an abandoned propane station. It wasn't apparent to us at the time, but this was yet another mistake. A fairly major one. Blackie assured us the entrance was child's play, and indeed it was. We barely bent to get under a massive pre-existing rip in the chain link, which had obviously been there a while, because the cuts were rusty. It struck me as odd that there wasn't a squirt of graffiti anywhere. The actual entrance to the building was almost as simple: we tried doors until one swung open, leaving an arc in the fresh snow. Seven individual sets of footprints crossed the arc to the inside, if you get my drift.

Inside we found a well-lit wonderland of large tanks and concrete pits and levels of red-painted steel mesh catwalks. Newish-looking and

ancient-looking tools were scattered about. Blackie climbed inside a tiny hole in a large vat to get his photo taken. We took a few more pictures and climbed up the catwalk into a very impressive three-storey high room full of vats of unimaginable size.

We kept to one side and explored all sorts of large rooms containing huge hoppers marked "Phosphoric Acid" and such. There was also an unusual pastel lime powder all over the floor in some of the rooms. Our tracks mingled with those already there. I stopped periodically to shoot the other explorers with my Super-8 movie camera. We kept finding fire extinguishers strewn about and seeming evidence of recent work having gone on. We moved to the other side of the cavernous vat room, which held about four tanker-truck-length tanks, and found smaller, but nonetheless huge fermentation vats and a 1970s computer system to control heat and pressures and such. Agent Kaos and Squeazy descended into a fermentation vat and I jokingly closed the lid on them. As they came out, I filmed them. As we all wandered around, everyone found something extremely interesting. Phoenix found a large bank of gauges, Blackie found a stainless steel beer stein on the end



The massive Molson Brewery complex by day.

of a 15-foot stainless steel rod — a giant Hunnish ladle for taking samples from deep inside the vats. We made our way back to the cavernous tank room and found a working fire extinguisher. Blackie shot a bit of the chemical out and we realized that's what the pastel lime powder was. We emptied the canister and let the powder float down like snow as I filmed the explorers running through the fog. This was yet another mistake. Yeah, we were stealthy and subtle like you wouldn't believe.

So essentially we'd been zig-zagging through this one huge building, main floor to the roof. We got out on the snow-covered roof and looked down over the well illuminated complex, down at the security cube and the several other large buildings. We watched trains pass loudly in the adjacent yard and took flash photos (yeah, on the roof) next to the surreally tall smokestack on the side of the building.

The next thing we found was a large laboratory containing everything but a Jacob's Ladder and a mad scientist. All glass rods, brown glass jugs containing chemicals and acids, Erlenmeyer flasks and test tubes, industrial fume hoods, and Bunsen burners up the yin-yang. There was a lot of chemical information and blank analytical batch reports. Completely fascinating stuff, we must've spent 45 minutes in that room alone.

We found our way to an older, lower section of the building made of brick and large wooden beams. It seemed a much older style of architecture that somehow gave me an impression of being Bavarian. There

were three descending levels of vast wide hallways, with massive wooden pillars in columns trailing in perspective toward an old fashioned cage-style cargo elevator. At the end of one of these wide corridors, which, in layout, sort of resembled the king's palace in every toga epic you'd ever seen, we found some old, old looking smallish fermentation vats and a small cubby cupboard Agent Kaos and I remarked would be a really good hiding place, should trouble arise.

"Trouble? We've been here for almost three hours and not heard a peep from anyone anywhere!"

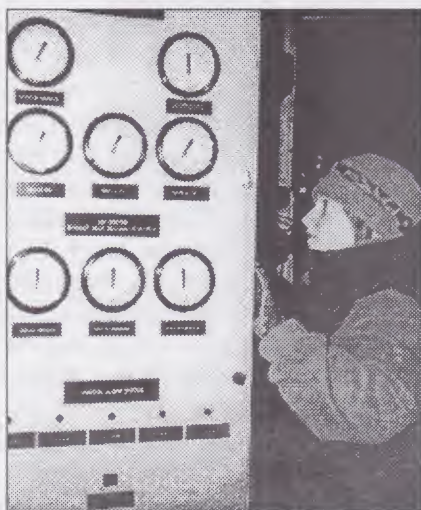
Arrogance is not your friend on an urban exploration mission. Arrogance should never be invited along with you under any circumstances, but that day, Arrogance was our best bud, along with Blatant Stupidity. Well, those two go hand in hand. I think they got somethin' goin' on. Anyway...

There was a point when one of us thought he'd heard a noise. We all hushed and stopped breathing and listened intently. We decided it was an acoustic hallucination from the low ceilings and pressed on to see more. We found a sort of skylight looking down on a very surreal Bavarian Inn-slash-bar one floor below — it was very medieval looking, with cast iron chandeliers and such. Blackie noted that this was where he'd seen live motion sensors on his previous visit. "The lights went on, but no one ever came," he stated. We found another cavernous room with a high ceiling and white ceramic tiles from top to bottom. Many of the tiles had loos-

ened. The room was extremely beautiful in its decay — exactly the sort of aesthetic I admire the most on a mission. It had a hell of a resonant echo as well. We rounded the corner and found even more huge, tubular, horizontal vats, insulated with something thick and white that had been flaking off. Agent Kaos shone his flashlight between two of the vats and let's say, "made a noise", rolled away in near collapse and sighed. He slyly convinced Blackie, who'd just arrived from the tile room, to do the same. Blackie made a loud, "JESUS!!!" and then realized there'd been a full length mirror at the end of the narrow dark corridor reflecting what at first looked like someone else with a flashlight. So, to recap, echos and yelling loudly, and laughing loudly afterwards: BAD.

We wandered around this basement a while longer, and Agent Kaos, Phoenix and Squeezy (who'd just then changed his name to Caustic, after finding a placard reading "caustic" on the floor), continued on ahead. Blackie was close behind them. Toad lingered behind as always and I hung back to catch the group on Super-8.

Toad and I came around a corner to the very loud, scary sound of a German Shepherd barking and straining hard against his leash. There was a Cowtown City Police officer holding him back, and also pointing a flashlight at us. Another two cops were pointing Glucks at our heads, with mini-Maglite flashlights held tight along the side of them. They were very loudly yelling at us to "Freeze!" which I did, and to put my hands up, which I



Phoenix examines some dials; Blackie and Kaos examine a tiled room; Squeezy (aka Caustic) examines some old machinery. (Photos: Mr. Sable.)

also did. One officer had to scream, "NOW! PUT YOUR HANDS UP NOW!" a few times to Toad, who was far too defiant for comfort. The cop's voice seemed a little more tinged with fear than with anger. He didn't know what the situation was. I was still holding the Super-8 in my raised hand. They suggested in ear-splitting, near-panicking tones, that we get against the wall. I complied, as did Toad, but she didn't make it easy for them. I cooperated completely. This was my first run-in with the law and I followed all the pertinent advice I could remember.

We were violently frisked and continually questioned. "What are you doing in here?!"

I answered, "Just taking pictures." The truth.

He asked what my Super-8 camera was over and over, "What's this? What is this?"

I thought to myself, "It's a camera, you moron, what's it look like?", but said, "It's a camera, sir."

"What is it?!"

"A movie camera"

"Do you have any drugs on you?!"

"No, sir."

Then we were handcuffed, far too tightly. We were escorted through a section of the building we hadn't seen before, which, despite the dire situation, was still pretty cool. They took us out to a paddy wagon in the very, very cold courtyard of the brewery. We were stripped of our ID and camera paraphernalia and packs, and stuffed inside the very cold metal box of the wagon.

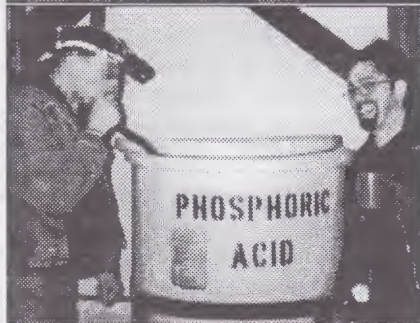
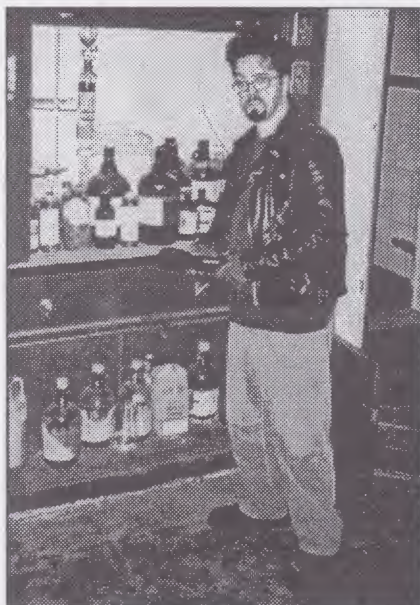
During this time, the others were apparently rounded up. I later heard

Agent Kaos's account of their capture: *"Suddenly Caustic, Phoenix and I heard loud barking echoing behind us. At first we assumed it was Blackie teasing as he had been doing frequently during the mission, but when Blackie ran by us shouting, 'That's not me!'; with the barking increasing in intensity, we all dashed. In the confusion we didn't establish where we were or where we were going with much certainty.... Blackie, Caustic, Phoenix and I found ourselves outside behind a locked gate leading to the parking lot. I climbed over and scoped out the scene finding us disturbingly close to the security booth and seeing at least one police van parked there with its lights on. The rest climbed over and we briskly but casually walked towards the perimeter fence around the property trying our best to stay out of sight. With some difficulty myself, Caustic and Phoenix climbed the fence, Blackie however had some trouble having brought and consumed some of Molson's fine beer during the mission. As we were trying to help him get over the fence an unmarked police van pulled up beside us and the interrogation began as a dog inside barked its head off. We were placed under arrest, searched and thrown into the back of the paddy wagon. Blackie was roughly forced to lie on the ground while he was searched by the police. We spent the better part of an hour in the back of the van freezing our fingers and toes off. Then we spent another 10 to 15 minutes outside in the cold as they gathered information from us one at a time."* I guess Phoenix started crying and it was just a scene and a half.

I could only think, for the next several hours in the cold, cold van, how much I just wanted to go to work in the morning and have everything be normal. I dimly recall Toad yelling at the police for whatever reasons — these memories are dimmed because it's been over a year between the event and my writing this. She certainly wasn't cooperating much. Honestly, this woman was the last person I'd ever want to spend time with — we'd developed quite a hate-on for each other over my Urban Explorers message boards — and here I am trapped in an ice cold frickin' box with her. The cops informed us this wasn't Toad's first run-in with the law either, making me even more pleased with the situation. In addition to wishing for warmth and normality, I hoped the others had escaped. Well, part of me did. Part of me had hoped they were in the same boat. I was all mood-swingy and bitter. Of course I was, I'd been caught.

Afterwards, I gathered that we were all isolated and everyone was asked the same questions over and over in as many different ways as one could ask the same question and after a few hours of us all giving consistent answers, they let us out of the paddy wagons after driving us to the abandoned propane station where all our cars were. They unlocked our cuffs and the pain in my shoulders relinquished a bit. We were surprised to see the others there. We asked each other what happened, though weren't allowed to leave. The rollers sat in their warm vans and asked us more questions out the window.

"What were you doing in there anyway?" one of the buttons asked in



After a visit to the lab, Mr. Sable joined Agent Kaos for some acid, which inspired Kaos to feign some industrial sabotage. (Photos: Mr. Sable)

a near-friendly manner.

"Taking pictures," I said, barely containing an eye roll.... I'd been hearing that question repeated for what seemed like forever.

"Jesus," the cops said, "I'm sure if you'd asked the owner, he'd have given you the grand tour."

"We didn't think there was an owner, it's been abandoned eight years."

He wrote that down.

"Awright. You, and you" — he pointed at Toad and I — "are free to go. You aren't being charged with anything, but that's not to say the owner won't charge you with trespassing later." He then looked at us sternly, and then said something right out of an old movie, "So, don't leave town for a while." I'd have laughed if I wasn't frozen. 'Officer Friendly' also mentioned that you can't get a passport or

a good job with a criminal record.

I warmed up my car and courteously waited for the others to get their freedom, which seemed to take a while. Apparently, they weren't cuffed at all, so I was a bit bitter about that. And they didn't have guns pointed at them. I couldn't be bitter about that part.... I was grateful they didn't have to feel that fear.

I went home at about 4 a.m., had the argument of my life with my wife, and that ended that seven-year marriage in a hurry, so I guess the night wasn't a total bust. In addition to being blessed with exploring a tiny part of one of the most incredible abandonments anywhere for about three hours, we also learned a lot of things one shouldn't do on a mission. Things like, parking next to your target, leaving tracks in snow or fire extinguisher chemicals, releasing fire

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extinguisher chemicals that your tracks can be seen in, making loud noises, being arrogant and cocky, taking flash photos on rooftops overlooking security booths (overlooking anything for that matter), not having a backup plan, lipping off cops while they have guns pointed at your face, that kinda thing. Stealth and discretion are the most important parts of any mission. Live and learn.

We were never charged with anything.

—Mr. Sable

Homeland Secured

Last spring I was arrested while exploring abandoned blast furnaces in East Chicago, Indiana. I am in my mid-20s, a student at an art school in Chicago, and I make some of my money by selling pictures of industrial remnants. I guess I feel that people should be able to see the wondrous interiors of the now-defunct plants that used to make their steel, plastic, and brass.

On the fateful day I parked my light pickup truck with a camper shell and California plates a little closer to the mill than I should have, on a patch of dirt next to the train tracks, and grabbed my cameras, lenses, and tripod.

The way into the mill was fairly straightforward, none of this fence hopping and belly crawling like at a lot of places, just an open gate with a sign that said "No Trespassing See Foreman In Office" (funny, because the office had the windows half smashed out of it and had obviously been used as a sleeping place for homeless people as well as raccoons and who

knows what else). After checking in, I walked around for a few hours taking pictures of the magnificent crumbling blast furnaces and their decaying infrastructure. As the sun went down and it started to get cold I packed up and walked back to the exit, since it's no fun being stuck in a haunted steel mill after dark, especially when the floor is caving in at places.

As I approached the exit I saw several police cruisers parked 50 feet away from my car. The back of my camper shell was open. They didn't see me, so I exited and walked towards my car, cameras in hand. As I approached my truck they noticed me and advanced toward me. Their spotlights were in my eyes and they were firing questions at me. What was I doing here? Thinking I had been doing nothing wrong, I just told the truth: I was taking pictures for an art project. This was the wrong wrong wrong answer. I now realize that I should have said that I was never inside the fence at all, and I was simply taking pictures because I was interested in buying the real estate or something. Because apparently they weren't buying that an artist would take pictures of a steel mill — artists take pictures of flowers and ponies.

"Why are you taking pictures of *this particular* steel mill?" they asked, as the giant towers of the twin furnaces loomed above the horizon.

"Just look at it! Don't you find that a little bit interesting?" I asked, which was the wrong thing to say, of course, because they really didn't find it at all interesting.

Soon more cars showed up. There were police SUVs and all sorts

of patrol cars. The questions turned to the awkward contents of the back of my pickup truck, which they had already gone through. Why was there a giant map of Chicago with red pins stuck all over it? Why was there an army surplus bag with a tape recorder in it? The map I had pulled out of the trash earlier that day, and it had red pins marking each of the various Harlem Furniture outlets. The Army surplus bag was just a cheap bag for holding my tape recorder. My car could have had a bomb in it, I was told — wasn't I aware that the country was on Orange Alert? They ordered me to let them search the front of my car.

"Are there any weapons in your car?" they asked, to which I replied that there was only a big flashlight that could be used to club people with. Then, their eyes all sparkling with glee, they shouted "What about *this*?!" and pulled out a fake Mexican scimitar that my dad had bought me in Ensenada, which I had shoved behind my seat and forgotten. I actually burst out laughing as I realized that, to the cops, this was damning evidence that I was indeed a terrorist bent on destroying America. I did my best to show them that it was just a dull metal replica and not a real weapon. "But the point is sharp!" one exclaimed, to which I replied that it was no sharper than the keys in my pocket. "Your keys are also weapons," one replied. They had me. I was losing the logical argument; everything was a weapon, and my errant behavior was very suspicious during this High Alert situation.

One of the officers seemed to be

the 'good cop' and he kept saying, "Yeah, yeah, normally we'd just give you a lecture and let you go, but you know, we can't be too careful these days." I asked if he thought I was going to blow up an abandoned factory in northern Indiana, and pointed out that it wasn't really a prime target. He said that East Chicago was very high on the list of potential terrorist targets.

They called the security guards from the steel company and said that they were going to let the security company decide what to do. As soon as they heard from the steel company security, they put me in handcuffs and marched me to their car and put me inside. I made sure that they locked my truck before they towed it, because my cameras were in it.

I was pretty freaked out as I had never been arrested before. I kept asking the cop who was sitting in the car what I was being arrested for, but he said that he couldn't tell me because he wasn't my arresting officer.

They took me to the station, refused to answer my questions, stripped me of my sweatshirt and shoelaces and left me handcuffed to a bar for an hour. I guess I must have looked nervous, because the booking officer walked out of the room for a minute and came back with a scented candle. After I had been there for a while, they took all my personal belongings including my piercings (which involved a funny game where two officers tried to make each other search my nuts to make sure they weren't pierced) and my insulin and syringe that I carry on me all the time for my diabetes. "If you get sick we'll take you to the hos-

pital," they said, as they confiscated my medicine. Then they let me make one phone call (I left a message on my girlfriend's phone), and put me in a small concrete room with a fluorescent bulb and a stainless steel toilet/drinking fountain combo.

Being in jail really sucks, and one of the things that sucks the most is that they don't tell you anything. I had managed to get some half sentences out of the booking officer to the effect that the soonest I would be released was in three days and that the FBI needed to question me. I still didn't know what charges I was facing, or what my prospects were. I couldn't sleep so I did pushups until I was exhausted and then passed out.

Some time later, I awoke to a loudspeaker telling me to get up so they could move me. The door opened automatically, and I grabbed the lace-less sneakers I'd been using for a pillow under my arm. I couldn't see because my blood sugar was all messed up and my eyes were foggy. As I walked down the hallway some guy told me to put my shoes on and clean out my locker

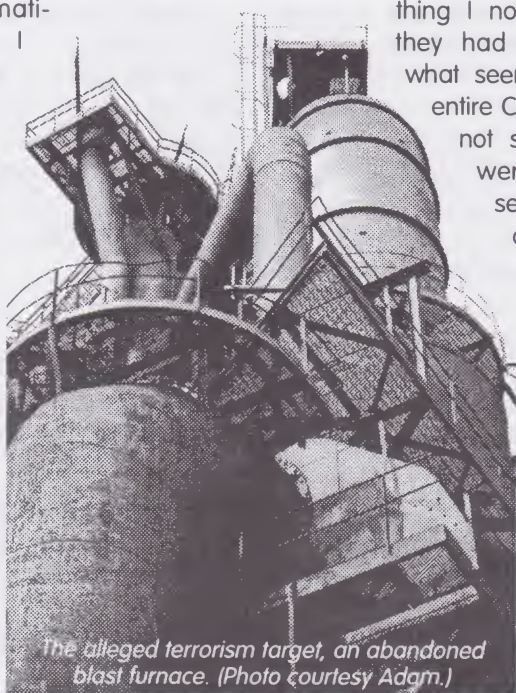
of personal items and walk out through the doors when they buzzed.

A friend had driven my girlfriend to East Chicago and she had bailed me out, after being scolded by the clerk at the desk who told her she shouldn't be hanging out with me as I was a bad person for doing something illegal, and I was only going to hurt her chances in this great big world. Bail, it turned out, was \$750, payable only in cash, which my girlfriend had managed to collect from friends.

The next day I drove down to pick up my truck from the lot where it had been towed. I noticed that, although the doors were locked, my cameras were nowhere to be found, and neither were my recently developed slides of similar subjects, my undeveloped film or my sketchbook. Another

thing I noticed was that they had gone through what seemed to be my entire CD collection. I'm not sure what they were looking for, secret plans from al-Qaeda

maybe?
Gangster
Rap? Celine
Dion? I don't
know, really. I
went to get
my cameras
back from the
police station,
but since it
was neither
Tuesday nor
Thursday
between 12



The alleged terrorism target, an abandoned blast furnace. (Photo courtesy Adam.)

and 2 p.m., they were unable to dispense any personal items. Next week on Tuesday I drove back down to East Chicago in order to claim my cameras, but the discharge officer said that the FBI now had them in custody. He explained that I needed to contact Officer Grimes, who was in charge, although he doubted I'd get them back for a week or two.

I got a lawyer who suggested I leave the case to him, which I was happy to do. The court date came and, when I showed up, my judge was wearing a volleyball t-shirt under his robes. Apparently he had been frat buddies with my lawyer because, after a cursory inspection of the documents, I was given what they call a "delay of prosecution". What this means is that they retain the right to bring the charges against me for a year, at which point they will throw them out, assuming I commit no further infractions and remain out of contact with the steel company (I'm not sure why).

It was very simple, took only a few minutes, and I was free, though getting my stuff back took many more trips over several months, and I never got my sketchbook back from the FBI.

I learned some important things from this experience. The police are scared to be the ones who let the terrorists get away. Even though they knew I was no terrorist after having talked to me for an hour before arresting me, they were afraid to trust their own judgment, and arrested me anyway, just to be sure, blaming it on national security and the "Orange Alert".

Life is easy being white, middle-class and well connected. If I had been Middle Eastern, Indian, Asian, or even Mexican or Black, I'm sure that I would have had a much harder time with the police. If I had had less generous friends or perhaps just poorer friends, I would have been unable to afford the luxury of not sitting in jail for days while my fate was decided. If my girlfriend hadn't had a connection to a great lawyer, who just happened to know the judge personally and was able to pull out a favor for me, chances are it wouldn't have gone so well. I wish I'd gotten off because the charges were stupid, not because I had a good lawyer, money, and a pale complexion.

—Adam

Scheduled Infiltrations

Stadia: Infiltration will discuss the art of sneaking into grand halls of spectacle in order to attend concerts, sporting events, monster truck rallies, religious conventions, or just for the joy of getting in and taking a look around.

Home Sweet Home: An unfavourable review of *Infiltration* once said "I get the feeling that these kids would get excited sneaking into their parents' closet." Guilty as charged. An upcoming issue will look at the joy, and practice value, of ultra-low-risk exploration in and around one's home.

As always, Infiltration seeks your stories and pictures about all the naughty places you've been and the cool things you've seen, and is very eager to interview security guards, surveillance professionals, investigative journalists and the like for possible future articles. Please get in touch!